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ABSTRACT

Part of the Educational Amendments of 1974, the Community Schools Act was enacted to provide grants to local education agencies (LEAs) and state education agencies (SEAs) for developing and expanding local community programs and to institutions of higher education (IHEs) for training leaders for these programs. To evaluate the effectiveness of these grants, a study was conducted to describe the organization and operation of the LEA, SEA, and IHE projects and to assess the impact of the projects at the local, state, and university levels. A survey was mailed to all ninety-three projects funded in fiscal 1976, and visits were made to twenty of the fifty-three projects funded in fiscal 1977. Based on the data collected, it was concluded that all three types of projects were successful in attaining their objectives with (1) the IHE projects training local and state practitioners; (2) SEAs increasing state level community education services and also giving training or assistance to clients which made an impact at the local level; and (3) LEAs providing services used and valued by the community, increasing citizen involvement in schools as well as cooperation between schools and other community agencies, and producing desired impacts on local communities and their individual members. (ELG)

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An Evaluation of the Community Education Program

The Final Report

CE 020 692

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
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This report is made pursuant to Contract No. 300-77-0159. The amount charged to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare for the work resulting in this report (inclusive of the amounts so charged for any prior reports submitted under this contract) is approximately $185,000. The names of the persons employed or retained by Development Associates with managerial or professional responsibility for this project and this report are listed below:

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PREFACE

This study was conducted for the national Community Education Advisory Council. In 1976 the Council directed the staff of the Community Education Program within the U.S. Office of Education to coordinate an assessment of programs funded under the Community Schools Act. Judging that objectivity would be enhanced, the Community Education Program staff arranged with the Office of Planning, Budget and Evaluation (OPBE) within the Office of Education to assume direction of the study. OPBE agreed and contributed additional financial support. After a competitive procurement process, in May 1977 Development Associates of Arlington, Virginia, was awarded the contract to design and implement the study.

Thus, while the study was performed by Development Associates (DA) under a contractual relationship with OPBE, the Community Education Advisory Council and the Community Education Program staff were instrumental in its conception and provided invaluable assistance throughout. On three occasions, the DA study director met with the full Council to discuss the progress of the study. The primary liaison with the Council, however, was through council member Dr. Robert Gilberts, Dean of the College of Education at the University of Oregon. Outside regular Council meetings, Dr. Gilberts met with the study team specifically to review the proposed design and to coordinate the Council's response to earlier versions of this final report.

In addition to Dr. Gilberts, DA acknowledges the invaluable assistance of Wendy Harris, Paul Messier, and Robert Maroney of OPBE and Bernie O'Hayre and Paul Tremper of the Community Education Program. Also of major importance to the study was the assistance provided by three leading community educators, Drs. George Wood, David Santellanes, and Keith Rogers who were influential in the study design phase, the development of 12 specifically designed questionnaires, and generally throughout all major conceptual facets of the undertaking. Dr. Wood is affiliated with the Institute for Community Education Development, Ball State University; Dr. Santellanes with the Northwest Community Education Development Center, University of Oregon; and Dr. Rogers with the Rocky Mountain Center for Community Education, Brigham Young University.

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CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

Residents in eastern Iowa are coming together to socialize and work on community problems for the first time in years. A semi-literate young mother in southern Virginia cries as she describes what attending night school means to her. Young people in a decayed New England city now enjoy attending movies in their own community. Two hundred senior citizens a week gather in a community school in suburban Los Angeles for a meal preceded by recreation and classes dealing with community issues.

Across the country, in rural areas, centers of major cities, and affluent suburban neighborhoods, community residents have said that in the past one or two years communication between schools and the community has improved, the types of programs and activities available through the schools are more helpful, and that they personally feel more comfortable going to school activities and take more advantage of them. Furthermore, teachers in these same communities have said that during the same period there was a positive change in student attitudes toward school, and staff in state and local agencies said they are cooperating more with the schools and with each other. Clearly, something positive has happened in these places, and an important factor in each one was a local community education program which had received support from its state and universities.

A. Background and Purpose of the Study

Community education, while not a recent phenomenon,* was given a new impetus through the passage by Congress of the Community Schools Act as part of the Educational Amendments of 1974. The Community Schools Act defines community education as

> "a program in which a public building, including but not limited to a public elementary or secondary school or community or junior college, is used as a community center operated in conjunction with other groups in the community, community organizations, and local governmental agencies, to provide educational, recreational, cultural, and other related community services for the community that center serves in accordance with the needs, interests, and concerns of that community."

Responsibility for implementing the Act is vested in the Community Education Program (CEP), an administrative unit within the U.S. Office of Education. Under the legislation, discretionary grants are made to local education agencies (LEA's) to initiate, expand or maintain local community education programs. Grants are also made to state education agencies (SEA's) to provide developmental and technical assistance to local community education

*As a concept community education has been advocated for over 40 years, and the C.S. Mott Foundation has provided several million dollars a year of support for more than two decades.

programs, and to institutions of higher education (IHE's) to provide short-term training programs to leaders in the field. The Community Schools Act is demonstration in nature. and grants under the program are usually small* and are utilized primarily to pay for the leadership costs of developing and administering a program.

The Community Schools Act provided for appointing a national Community Education Advisory Council which, among other prescribed duties, is to establish an evaluation system and report to Congress annually. In partial fulfillment of this mandate, this assessment of federally funded projects was authorized. As initially set forth, the goals of the study were to:

- describe the organization and operation of LEA, SEA and IHE projects; and
- evaluate the impact of the projects at the local, state, and university levels.

In May 1977, following a competitive procurement process, Development Associates, Inc., began the design and implementation of the assessment. After a survey of literature, leaders in the field and federal policymakers and administrators, study plans and procedures were designed by Development Associates.

Plans were made such that the results would be useful to Congress as it considered future community education legislation and to administrators as they planned and managed program activities. A summative assessment of impacts was particularly desired as input into the legislative process, and formative information relating impacts to project characteristics and assessing federal program practices and policies was of special interest at the operating level. Information on projects which received funds only in the first year of the program (i.e., 1976 but not in 1977) was desired because it relates directly to a recurring debate over whether policy should be changed to permit multi-year grants, or at least, to treat previously funded projects separately.

B. What is Community Education

The Community Schools Act contains a definition of community education which was quoted above. While widely accepted and appropriate for the purposes of the Act, this definition is not intended to tell potential grant recipients very much about what they are expected to do or how they are to go about planning, organizing and implementing a community education program. Closer, but still not designed for this purpose, is a set of eight

* Across the three types of projects, the average (mean) grant in FY 76 was $33,050; in FY 77 it was $39,537.

"minimum elements" of a community education program which are generally endorsed by most professionals in the field. These elements were printed in the Federal Register* and are requirements which are to be met or worked toward in all federally supported community education projects. Accordingly, from this perspective:

1. The program must provide for direct and substantial involvement of a public elementary or secondary school in the administration and operation of the program.

2. The program must serve an identified community which is at least co-extensive with the school attendance area of the school involved in it, except where circumstances warrant the identification of a smaller community.

3. Program services to the community must be sufficiently concentrated and comprehensive in a specific public facility. Satellite or mobile facilities related to the community center may be used by the center for the provision of a portion of the program's activities.

4. The program must extend the program activities and services offered by, and uses made of, the public facility being used. This extension should include the scope and nature of the program service, the total population served, and the hours of service.

5. The program must include systematic and effective procedures: (i) for identifying and documenting on a continuing basis the needs, interests, and concerns of the community served, and (ii) for responding to such needs, interests and concerns.

6. The program must provide for the identification and utilization to the fullest extent possible of educational, cultural, recreational and other existing or planned resources in the community. The program must also be designed to encourage and utilize cooperative arrangements among public and private agencies to make maximum use of the talents and resources of the community, avoiding duplication of services.

7. The program must be designed to serve all age groups in the community as well as groups within the community with special needs (such as persons of limited English-speaking ability, mentally or physically handicapped, etc.) or other special target groups not adequately served by existing programs in the community.

*Federal Register, Part 2, Friday, December 2, 1975. Volume 40, No. 240.

8. The program must provide for the active and continuous involvement of institutions, groups and individuals broadly representative of the community served. They must be continually involved in the assessment of community needs, the identification of community resources, and in program evaluation.

While there is no single written definition of what a community education program is or includes,* in essence it has been operationally defined as the collaboration of the educational system, other agencies, and the public in the resolution of locally felt needs. Specific program goals and procedures are locally defined and the specifically intended outcomes or impacts from the projects are defined locally as well. Thus, project emphases, procedures and activities vary widely, with community education being expected to adapt to the local context, assisting local people in doing what they want to do, rather than producing predetermined changes which may or may not be widely endorsed.

While this view of community education may be a virtue to a project or program administrator, from the perspective of an evaluator or researcher in the field the ambiguities pose serious problems. They compound the conceptual and analytic demands and virtually assure that the results of evaluation efforts will be challenged by some. While nothing can be done about the latter, with respect to the breadth and ambiguity of community education the strategy adopted for this study was to incorporate several key approaches into the data collection and analysis plans.

C. Summary of Study Scope and Method

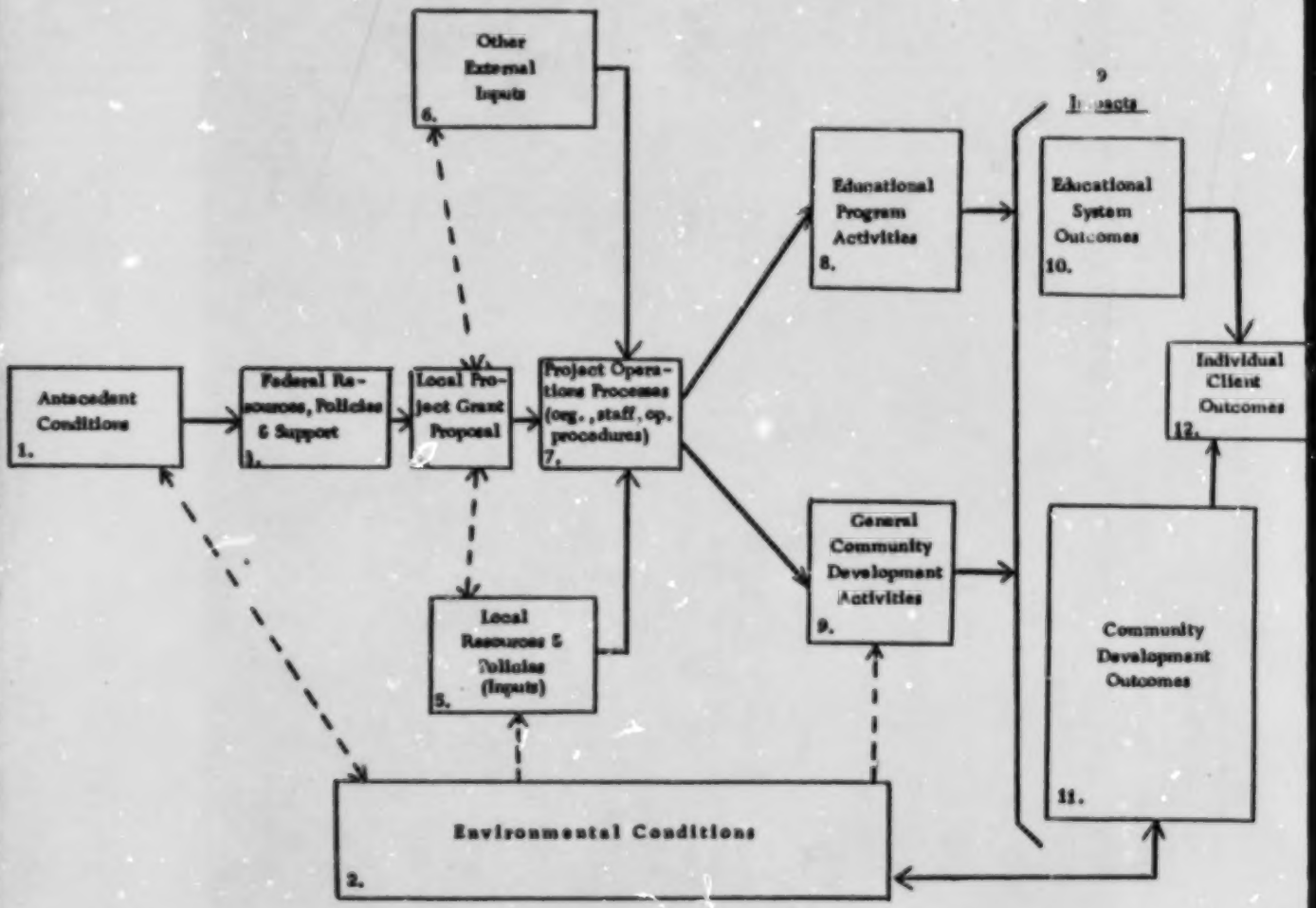
Conceptually, the study was organized around Stuffelbeam's "Content, Input, Process and Product" evaluation model, and the community education program model presented as Exhibit 1.** As suggested by the exhibit, the study required gathering data on: prior conditions in each project site, financial support, the project proposal and local operations, and the product or impacts of the projects. Potentially, there could be three relatively separate areas of impact: impacts on the educational systems, on other facets of the community and on individuals. Though most clear at the local level, the three areas of impact were also applicable to state education agencies (SEA's) and university projects, and they guided the data collection at these levels as well.

*In addition to these federal statements, other definitional statements have been developed in connection with C.S. Mott Foundation supported activities and still others appear frequently in the literature.

**The program model was developed for this study. The evaluation model is presented in: Stuffelbeam, Daniel L., and others (Phi Delta Kappa National Study Committee on Evaluation). Educational Evaluation and Decision-Making. Itasca. S.E. Peacock Publishers, Inc., 1971.

EXHIBIT 1

COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROGRAM MODEL



Substantively, the study was concerned with the operation of the community education program at all levels and included (a) all projects which were funded only in FY 76, and (b) projects which were funded in both FY 76 and FY 77. On the assumption that project impacts could be assessed adequately only after at least one full year of project operations, the focus of attention and resources was on those projects refunded in FY 77.

D. Study Method and Procedures

The basic strategy for data collection from both refunded and non-refunded projects was to conduct a mail survey of all (93) projects federally funded in FY 76 and to visit a sample of 20 projects (out of 53) refunded in FY 77. The visits were to verify and supplement the mail survey information.

Mail Survey Data Collection

The mail survey included the 93 FY 76 projects, divided into the two basic groups of 40 non-refunded and 53 refunded projects, respectively. No information was sought from those projects funded for the first time in FY 77.

For the non-refunded projects, a brief questionnaire was mailed to the person identified in grant documents as the grantee's official liaison with USOE (i.e., not necessarily the project director). The questionnaire was accompanied by a cover letter indicating that, if most appropriate, the survey could be completed by the former director or an equally knowledgeable member of the grantee's staff. For the refunded projects, a comprehensive, multi-page questionnaire was mailed to the project director.

Non-response to the mail survey was followed up by telephone and written reminders. In the case of the non-refunded projects, the survey data from four projects eventually was obtained by telephone. In the case of refunded SEA projects, the assistance of CEP staff was critical in securing a high rate of response. As shown in Exhibit 2, page 7 , the response rate for the mail survey was almost perfect, which is quite unusual.

EXHIBIT 2

MAIL SURVEY RESPONSE RATES:
FEDERALLY FUNDED (1976 and 1977) COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROJECTS

	PROJECT TYPE				Total
	Non-Refunded	Refunded IHE's	Refunded SEA's	Refunded LEA's	
No. Responding	40	6	26	20	92
No.of Projects	40	6	27	20	93
Percent of Response	100%	100%	96%	100%	99%

Site Selection Criteria

Because a relatively small number of refunded projects existed (53), project characteristics varied considerably, and no more than 20 sites could be visited within the available time and resources, a purposive rather than purely random or probability sampling approach to site selection was judged to best meet the study objectives. Site selection was made after first dividing the projects into the three major categories identified in federal legislation; that is, institutions of higher education (IHE's), state education agencies (SEA), and local education agencies (LEA's). There were six refunded IHE's, 27 refunded SEA's, and 20 refunded LEA's.

IHE's: The six refunded IHE's had significantly different project objectives and operating procedures and consideration was given to visiting all six projects. It was concluded, however, that visits would be made only to four: Ball State University, Miami-Dade Community College, Syracuse University and the University of Virginia. With respect to the other two IHE's, some impact data from one of the remaining projects (Texas A & M) was obtained in the course of other aspects of the study. It was premature to seek impact data from the other IHE (Arizona State University) because it was engaged in a materials development effort which was expected to require several years to complete.

SEA's: After reviewing available information on the 27 refunded SEA projects, it was decided that five would be selected for site visits on the basis of differences in project goal emphases, the existence of state legislation pertaining to community education, and whether there was a refunded LEA in the state. Visits were made to the SEA's in California, Colorado, Florida, New Jersey, and Tennessee.

LEA's: Because of the wide variability among LEA projects and the greatest interest lying in how community education programs were operating at the local level, more projects were selected from among the LEA category than from SEA's or IHE's. After reviewing the merits of various sampling criteria, the following three were judged most salient for the purpose of site selection: (1) type of project sponsor, (2) project goal emphasis on community participation in project planning, and (3) prior community education programming in the LEA. In addition, the sites selected were reviewed for their rural/urban mix, whether these LEA's were supported by a refunded SEA project, and general geographic distribution across the country. In total, 11 of the 20 LEA projects were visited. They were:

- Bowling Green, Kentucky
- Comal County, Texas
- Gloucester, Virginia
- Horry County, South Carolina
- Lynn, Massachusetts
- Paramount, California
- Poudre Valley, Colorado
- Rush-Henrietta, New York
- Salem, Oregon
- Tucson, Arizona
- Mississippi Bend, Iowa

Site Visit Respondents

At each of the 20 selected sites, the people contacted comprised two general groups. The first group consisted of grantee staff and associates, including staff supervisors and colleagues. Besides staff, the first group included school board members, superintendents, principals, and teachers as well as colleagues and supervisors in other sections of the grant-receiving institutions; also included in this group were chairpersons of project advisory councils. To accommodate the diversity of roles, relationships and perspectives, eight separate questionnaires were developed for the first group and three for the second.*

The second group consisted of direct participants in project-related activities (i.e., clients) and other knowledgeable members of the community. Members of the second group included staff of state and local agencies expected to be cooperating

* A twelfth questionnaire was developed for the mail survey of projects which were funded only in FY 76.

with the community education project,* and participants in project-related activities. At the SEA and IHE projects, participants were randomly selected from lists of persons who attended workshops, conferences or received individualized training or assistance; these clients were surveyed by telephone. At the LEA projects, ten participants were randomly selected in each of four groups: participants in structured learning experiences, members of community groups assisted by program staff, leaders of community groups using project facilities, and participants in recreational or social activities. Exhibit 3 below provides a summary of the number and percent of respondents by level of project and major respondent category at the 20 visited projects.

EXHIBIT 3

SUMMARY OF NUMBER OF INTERVIEW RESPONDENTS AT THE 20 VISITED PROJECTS BY PROJECT LEVEL AND MAJOR CATEGORY OF RESPONDENT*

PROJECT TYPE / MAJOR RESPONDENT CATEGORY	IHE		SEA		LEA		TOTAL	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Grantee Staff and Associates	34	15.0	25	10.1	123	16.0	182	14.6
Project Clients and Knowledgeable Community Observers	193	85.0	223	89.9	648	84.0	1,064	85.4
Total Number of Interviews from 20 Visited Projects	227	100%	248	100%	771	100%	1,246	100%

*Does not include 20 project directors (4 IHE, 5 SEA and 11 LEA) who received mail questionnaires.

*At each LEA and SEA project, contact was made with a representative of each of the following types of agencies which had been identified in federal legislation or regulations: Health, Parks and Recreation, Aging, Human Resources, and Community Colleges. Also, representatives from up to five others identified by project staff were interviewed.

Data Collection

All data from the mail and site visit surveys were collected between late January and late March 1978. The mail surveys were sent on January 21 and the last questionnaire included in the analysis was received on March 24. The visits to 20 projects were made between January 30 and February 22, 1978, and the telephone survey of IHE and SEA clients was conducted during the last week of February and the first three weeks of March. The site visits were made by four teams of professionals experienced in related data collection and evaluation efforts and specially trained in the background and procedures of this study. Two-person teams spent two days at the SEA projects and up to two days at the IHE projects. Depending on the number of schools and geographic area encompassed, visits to the LEA projects were for three or four days by teams of two or three professional staff. In total, nine staff visited the 20 projects, with all visiting at least two LEA's and one SEA. The telephone survey of IHE and SEA clients was conducted by members of the site visit teams, except that calls to all the clients of two projects were made by the study's research assistant.

Data Analysis

Data processing and analyses were performed by Development Associates' staff using HEW-based third-generation computer facilities and equipment. In addition to obtaining such basic descriptive statistics as frequencies, percents, and measures of central tendency, various more sophisticated analyses were performed. Hierarchical cluster analysis techniques were used to determine the most salient input, process and impact dimensions of the project directors' questionnaires. This technique also was used to cluster SEA's into meaningful groups for descriptive and analytic purposes. Cluster analyses also were used with LEA's. Non-parametric and parametric correlations, analysis of variance, significance tests and other procedures were also performed as appropriate. This included multivariate analyses. A more complete discussion of the analyses and other aspects of study method and technique is presented in the technical supplement volume of the Final Report.

E. Study Limitations

Certain conceptual and methodological factors constricted the scope of the study and affected the interpretation of results. These are being mentioned here for the benefit of readers in utilizing and fully understanding the study findings.

- All data were collected at one point in time without using comparison projects as a baseline - The study design basically is a cross-sectional approach: projects were contacted at one point in time, and asked for current and retrospective (pre-1976) information on operations, activities and impacts. It was beyond the study scope and resources to employ a baseline comparison group of unfunded yet similar projects or a before-after methodology. Such approaches would have more precisely determined if the levels of current project operations, activities and impacts reported could indeed be attributed to the federally supported projects. Although such methodologies were unable to be used here, one could still conclude the federally supported projects were effective. In fact, the project impacts reported were consistent across funding categories, types of respondents and types of impact measures.

- The study was based on evaluating a small number of refunded projects - The statistical precision of project-level comparisons was restricted in part by the sample size of 20 visited sites and the target population itself only numbering 53 refunded projects. In particular, analyses at IHE levels had to be primarily descriptive since only six were refunded and four were visited.

- Project directors and some other respondents were logical sources of data on project operations, activities and impacts, yet potentially had self-serving interests - To some extent there were potential biases in the mail survey responses of project directors. Recognizing this, the study design utilized a variety of data sources to extend and verify the project director responses. The fairly high consensus of findings across respondents (including classroom teachers, staff of potentially conflicting community agencies, etc.), which also was independently confirmed by program observations and narrative reports filed by DA's field team members, imply that this potential bias was checked.

- It was difficult to determine whether project impacts could be attributed to the presence of the federal award rather than to other factors - This was because many of the projects had been operating prior to July 1976 when federal monies were awarded. In addition, all had several sources of funds other than federal monies. Because of both these situations, it was difficult to attribute project impacts directly to the implementation of the federal award. Survey question content and response formats attempted to assess activities, operations and impacts both before and after July 1976, looking for a change that paralleled the onset of the federal award. Further, the data collection specifically was geared to contact schools and respondents affiliated with the federal program per se. However, being able to detect the presence of and utilization of federal monies was difficult.

- Certain definitions of terms were vague and project operations were highly diverse - The study operated in an atmosphere of unstandardized definitions, lack of project reporting procedures and wide diversity in project operations. Thus, it was difficult to measure accurately certain issues, apply particular sampling criteria or make certain between-project comparisons. Also, since it was judged inappropriate to apply rigid evaluative criteria at this time, the assessment and analyses of project results were based on a wide range of process and impact measures.

Finally, in generalizing from these results the reader also needs to keep in mind the following facts. This study is not one of community education per se, but of federally funded projects, a two-year old effort. Thus, caution must be exercised in generalizing to (a) non-federally funded projects, or (b) even the federally funded projects which only began operations in FY 77, since both types of projects were not included in this study.

Moreover, these projects are not a cross-section or a representative sample of all projects which applied for federal funding. In the first year of federal funding, 14 percent of projects applying were funded (93 of 660) and in the second year 19.5 percent (92 of 475 applications). The present study focused on the projects which were funded in both years, an even smaller percentage. Therefore, the reader is cautioned against generalizing the reported levels of impacts in the studied projects, since the study did not gather comparative data from projects which: (1) applied and were not funded, (2) reapplied and were not refunded, or (3) operated projects without federal funding.

From another perspective, the staff of projects included in this study seem to have had an unusually high degree of interest in the quality of their operations and an especially high degree of commitment to their project. This may be a function of the relative newness of the federal funding initiative, or the nature of the community education movement across the country. There is no way of knowing the extent to which other community education project staffs also possess this level of commitment.

In summary, then, the projects which were studied are in some ways atypical of other projects, and that should be recognized when generalizing from these findings.

CHAPTER 2. FEDERAL LEVEL OPERATIONS

Although the focus of the study was at the project level, an early appreciation of the relationship between federal policies and procedures and project operations is important. Not only does the discussion which follows provide background and contextual information which will assist in interpreting the project level findings, it also holds suggestions for how the program may be enhanced in the future.

A. The Federal Office and Procedures

With passage of the Community Schools Act, the federal government became an active force in an already established network of community education projects and practitioners. Already, the C.S. Mott Foundation had promoted the concept, trained leaders, and supported projects for over 20 years. When the Community Schools Act was passed, indeed instrumental in its passage, were the already functioning National Community Education Association (now serving over 1,500 professional and lay members), the National Center for Community Education in Flint, Michigan (serving as a center for specialized training), and the Office of Community Education Research at the University of Michigan's School of Education (whose contributions to the field included publication of a series of research monographs). Equally important, there was already a network of regional education and training centers, now over 80 in number, located primarily at universities, and state departments of education. To this existing structure the organizations and activities made possible by the Community Schools Act have been joined.

Organizationally, the national Community Education Advisory Council and the Community Education Program within the U.S. Office of Education constitute the two major additions to national level leadership in community education as a result of the Community Schools Act. The Advisory Council was created by the Act and charged with providing "advice to the Commissioner (of Education) on policy matters relating to the interests of community schools." In addition, it was empowered to undertake studies and to address other related issues. During its first two years of operations, the Council commissioned 13 research studies and also provided significant support for this evaluation report. By the end of the initial three years of federal involvement in community education, the Council will have expended $470,000 to carry out its legislative mandates.

The Community Education Program was established as a new office within the U.S. Office of Education in order to carry out the mandate of the Act. Though not its only purpose, the major function of the program office was to oversee the award of federal grants. Initially, a total of $15 million was authorized for grants to SEA's and LEA's to pay the federal share of the cost of planning, establishing, expanding, and operating community education programs. Fifty percent was to be allocated to SEA's and fifty percent to LEA's. An additional $2 million was authorized for grants to IHE's to develop and establish, or to expand, programs to train persons to plan and operate community education programs. Of the $17 million which was authorized, $3,553,000 was actually appropriated by Congress for each of the first two program years (i.e., FY 76 and FY 77).

In its first program year (1976-77), the Community Education Program awarded a total of 93 project grants, and 92 were awarded during the second. In both years all the available funds were awarded, with LEA's and SEA's each receiving $1,564,000 and IHE's receiving $425,000. The first year there were 660 applications for federal funds and 471 the second; the decline is explainable at least in part by the recognition of potential applicants of the intense competition for a relatively small federal grant. Exhibit 4 below shows the number of projects funded per year in each of the major grantee categories and the number of projects which were refunded the second year (FY 1977).

EXHIBIT 4

NUMBER OF COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROJECTS FUNDED IN FISCAL YEARS 1976 and 1977 BY GENERAL CATEGORIES

Funding Category of Project or Type of Project Sponsor	Number Funded FY 76	Number Funded FY 77	Number Refunded FY 77	Unduplicated No. of Federally Funded Projects*
Institutions of Higher Education (IHE's)	13	11	6	18
State Education Agencies (SEA's)	32	33	27	38
Local Education Agencies (LEA's)	48	48	20	76
TOTAL	93	92	53	132

*Counted once as a funded project, regardless of year of funding.

In order to expedite the grant-making process, the Commissioner of Education allocated the Community Education Program five full-time professional positions and two clerical staff. From time to time an additional temporary professional was added to the staff. This staff has been primarily responsible for the selection, funding, evaluation, and provision of technical assistance to community education grantees. With the exception of the program director who was replaced while on a one-year leave of absence and the "temporary slots," there has been no turnover in program staff since the inception of the program.

During the first program year, responsibility for monitoring LEA and IHE grants was divided among program officers; monitoring all SEA grants was the responsibility of the director of the office. These assignments were changed for the second program year so that grantees were geographically clustered and assigned to program officers regardless of grantee type.

During the 1976-77 funding period, program officers were in contact with their respective grantees by means of telephone and written communications. Although monitoring visits were authorized, because of budget constraints within the Office of Education not all the grantees were visited. Some program officers regularly called their grantees once a month, others only as needed, but all called their grantees in response to letters of inquiry.

The telephone contacts between program staff and the grantees were documented in the grantee's "program" file, which also contained copies of correspondence. However, in reviewing a sample of these "program" files, the only written correspondence from the federal level to the grantee were the computerized printouts notifying grantees of their award or of a change in their grant.

In keeping with the federal policy of minimizing paperwork, grantees are required only to submit an interim and a final report. Interim reports consisted of a written narrative of the project activities during the first six months of operation and a Financial Status Report, HEW-601T, completed for the same time period. This interim report was due at the Office of Education within 45 days after the sixth month of the project. Final reports consisted of a written narrative of the project activities during the entire project grant period and a Financial Status Report, HEW-601T, covering the same period. The Final Report was due within 90 days of the last day of the grant period.

There was no common program reporting format required for the first program year interim and final reports, although a suggested outline was offered and followed by some. A basic reporting format was prescribed for the 1977-78 grantees and all grantees in FY 77-78 will have a common format to follow when writing their narrative on program progress and achievements by responding to a common set of questions.

From a fiscal point of view, the only monitoring of the utilization of federal funds was performed by the Grants Management Office when it reviewed the Financial Status Report, HEW-601T. The review consisted of comparing project dollar outlays to the budget in the grant application. When discrepancies were noted, the grantee was contacted by phone for resolution or additional information. According to the grants office, and confirmed during the site visits, the report form (HEW-601T) was inadequate for any means of assuring that federal (as well as non-federal) funds were being spent as proposed in the grant application. The form only reflected total outlays for the first six months and for the entire grant period, but not expenditure by categories. Thus, for example, these reported outlays were insufficient for cost effectiveness or efficiency analysis purposes. Indeed, it was concluded from the mail survey and site visits that such cost data were simply unavailable at many projects and would require a major investment of time to secure at others.

The only other financial reporting done was on the Request for Advance for Reimbursement Form, HEW-604T. This form contained the same financial data as the Financial Status Report but was submitted to the appropriate finance office for grant payment purposes. These requests were not made a part of either the program file or the grant file, but were maintained by the finance office.

B. Relations with the Projects

A critical element in any federal program is the relationship which exists between the operating projects and the grant-making and monitoring office in Washington. Consequently, in designing this study it was decided to include the practices and policies of the Community Education Program as important areas of investigation which might provide insights for program improvements.

Specifically, directors of refunded LEA, SEA, and IHE projects were asked two questions providing direct insight into the relationship between them and the Office of Education (USOE). The first of these questions was: "How would you characterize the support and/or assistance (other than financial) you have received from the U.S. Office of Community Education?" The second question was open-ended and asked the project directors what suggestions they would have for USOE that would improve the effectiveness of community education programs. The results of the first question are shown below, indicating an overall mean of 4.18 on the five point scale.

EXHIBIT 5

PROJECT DIRECTORS' ASSESSMENT OF SUPPORT FROM USOE

	LEA	SEA	IHE	TOTAL
1. There has been virtually no interaction.	0	0	1 (17%)	1 (2%)
2. There has been occasional interaction but no substantial support or assistance.	1 (5%)	0	0	1 (2%)
3. There has been occasional interaction but it has generally had a neutral effect on the project (e.g., took time away from other things).	1 (5%)	1 (4%)	2 (33%)	4 (8%)
4. There has been considerable interaction which has generally had a neutral to positive effect on the project.	11 (55%)	14 (54%)	2 (33%)	27 (52%)
5. There has been considerable interaction which has generally been of great assistance to the project.	7 (35%)	10 (38%)	1 (17%)	18 (35%)
6. No Response.	0	1 (4%)	0	1 (2%)
Mean	4.20	4.36	3.33	4.18
TOTAL	20	26	6	52

As is suggested by the exhibit, the majority of community education project directors have a favorable attitude toward USOE and have been pleased at the amount and the results of the interaction. Several of the project directors commented, either in response to this question or in response to the question concerning their suggestions, that federal guidance and procedures in working with grantees were very good and needed no changing. A specific comment often made, either on the questionnaires or in personal interviews, was that the grantees were pleased with the fact that they were allowed to use the grant money in the ways they felt were best in their situation, without the burden of meeting requirements that were not appropriate for them. They characterized the stance of the federal staff as non-interfering but helpful when needed.

Directors of the projects which received only one year of federal funding were not asked the same question, so a direct comparison cannot be made between the refunded and non-refunded projects. However, directors of non-refunded projects were asked if they had received technical assistance from the federal office. Of the 40 project directors questioned, 12 said that they had not received such assistance, and seven of the twelve said they would have wanted it. This might indicate a slightly lower level of satisfaction. However, since the refunded projects had two and a half years in which to experience interaction with the federal office, and the non-refunded projects only had one year, direct comparisons are not appropriate. Had these projects been refunded, they might have received the assistance they desired during the second year. Another factor which may have had some influence on some of the seven who said they would have wanted technical assistance is that they were not refunded. Five of these seven did apply for a second grant. Also, it is not known if any of the seven requested assistance and did not receive it, or if in retrospect they simply feel that they would have liked it. Overall, it would appear that a majority of non-refunded projects, like the great majority of refunded projects, were quite satisfied with their relationship with the federal Community Education Program. This is further supported by the suggestions they made to the Office of Education which, for the most part, lack criticism of the federal relationship to the projects.

C. Suggestions for the Future

A variety of community education project staff and related persons were asked to make specific suggestions to the Office of Education that would improve the effectiveness of community education programs. Across the LEA, SEA, and IHE refunded and non-refunded projects, there were 219 respondents. As shown in the summary of responses in Exhibit 6, (on the following page) 88 (40%) of the respondents were from refunded LEA's, 51 (23%) were from refunded SEA's, 40 (18%) were from refunded IHE's, and 40 (18%) from non-refunded projects. The respondents in the SEA and IHE associates categories were staff, colleagues, and administrative superiors of the project directors.

As asked, the question was completely open-ended and respondents were not given any categories in which to list suggestions. Categories 1-10 shown in Exhibit 6 were determined before the survey was taken and the others were added as needed during tabulation. It is interesting to note that there were very few responses in categories such as "reduce paper work," "reduce the time needed to deal with USOE concerns" and the others that imply criticism of the federal office. This tends to support the earlier conclusion that most project people were satisfied with their relationship with the federal Community Education Program.

Some similarities appear across all types (LEA, SEA, and IHE) of projects. The most noteworthy is the request for more technical assistance, support, and onsite visits. Since the project staff reported that they were generally satisfied with the assistance and support given by the federal office, an attempt was made to understand more fully the request for more technical assistance. Comparisons were made between project directors who made this request and those who did not in relation to their feelings about training and technical assistance they had received from IHE's and SEA's and about their interaction with USOE. These comparisons showed no significant relationships. Project directors who had much training and rated their training highly did not differ from other project directors with respect to requesting more training and technical assistance. However, they may have been asking for a different type of training and technical assistance to augment what they already had.

It should be noted that a specific form of assistance and support often requested was that of regional and/or national workshops. This might be interpreted as a request for greater interaction with people from other community education projects.

EXHIBIT 6

SUMMARY OF RESPONDENT SUGGESTIONS TO USOE

RESPONDENT	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	TYPES OF SUGGESTIONS																				TOTAL NUMBER OF SUGGESTIONS
		No suggestions	Generality	Speed up review and award process	Make grants for more than one year	Provide more technical assistance/support	Provide clear performance standards	Reduce paper work	Reduce time needed to deal with USOCE requirements/standards	Increase publicity for CE	Maintain CE Clearinghouse	More onsite visits	Promote interagency cooperation	Provide at least six months notice re. refunding	Larger grants	Provide evaluation models/assistance	Support/fund IHE's	Make grants to SEA for distribution within State	Other	Intra-State Coordination		
LEA Project Director	20	0	2	0	7	10	2	0	0	0	2	5	0	1	0	2	1	0	0	6	3	41
LEA Build Coord.	39	0	4	2	10	5	1	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	5	0	41
LEA Superintendants School Board Members	29	0	4	0	7	5	0	1	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	9	3	1	2	8	0	45
LEA Total	88	0	10	2	24	20	3	1	0	1	8	6	0	1	0	11	5	1	2	19	3	127
SEA Project Director	26	0	0	0	2	8	1	0	0	1	1	3	2	2	0	3	0	0	8	3	5	37
SEA Associates	25	0	2	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	4	2	1	3	0	6	0	0	6	2	0	30
SEA Total	51	0	2	0	4	10	1	0	0	1	5	5	3	5	0	9	0	0	14	5	5	69
IHE Project Director	6	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	3	10
IHE Associates	34	0	7	3	6	3	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	3	0	11	2	2	3	9	0	51
IHE Total	40	0	7	3	6	6	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	3	0	11	3	2	3	11	0	61
Refunded Projects Total	179	0	19	5	34	36	4	1	0	2	15	12	3	9	0	31	8	3	19	35	11	257
Non-Refunded Project Directors	40	0	4	0	27	6	3	2	0	0	0	1	7	3	0	4	0	1	4	7	0	69
GRAND TOTALS	219	0	23	5	61	42	7	3	0	2	15	13	10	12	0	35	8	4	23	42	11	326

Further evidence supporting this interpretation may be found by examining the request for "maintaining a community education clearinghouse."*

The "clearinghouse" category included not only those suggestions which specifically mention a clearinghouse, but also such requests as sharing information on new ideas, models and case studies, and requests for information to be regularly disseminated through a newsletter. In a real sense, these were all requests for assistance and support through printed materials. Again, the emphasis was on sharing information from other projects.

In addition to suggestions that were made by several persons in all types of projects, there were several common suggestions within each type or which were common to two of the three types of projects. For example, the request for multi-year (as opposed to single year) funding was much more prevalent among LEA's (and non-refunded projects) than among IHE's or SEA's. A comparison was made between those who made this suggestion and those who did not in relation to what they felt would happen to their project if federal funds were discontinued. This comparison showed that non-refunded project directors tended to suggest multi-year funding if in fact their projects had been discontinued or were reduced as a result of not being federally funded a second year.

A suggestion that was made by several SEA project directors, but not by LEA or IHE directors, was for grants to be made only to SEA's and for the SEA's to then distribute the money to LEA's and IHE's in the states. SEA directors who made this suggestion said that the state as a whole would benefit from this as the money could be directed to a greater number of projects. Verbally, several of the LEA and IHE directors have challenged this point of view.

Another suggestion had a similar intent. This was the suggestion made by three IHE directors and five SEA directors for the federal office to foster more intra-state coordination, especially in states in which both the SEA and IHE have community education grants. One IHE director suggested that SEA-IHE cooperation be specified in the grant documents themselves.

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*A community education materials and information clearinghouse has been operating since the spring of 1977 through a grant from USOE.

D. Conclusion

Overall, the data indicate that the Community Education Program has succeeded in its mandated mission of selecting, funding, and providing support to local, state, and university sponsored projects. Refunded community education project staff seem to be quite pleased with the way in which the USOE is operating and administering the grant program. The suggestions they make tend not to be critical, but rather simply to ask for more of what the program is already offering: namely, more money for longer periods of time, and increased technical assistance.

CHAPTER 3. IHE PROJECTS: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

In accordance with the Community Schools Act, grants to institutions of higher education (IHE's) were made to programs: (1) to train persons planning and operating community education programs in local educational agencies (LEA's); (2) to train persons in state educational agencies (SEA's) in planning and providing developmental and technical assistance to community education programs administered by local educational agencies; (3) to assess appropriate training competencies needed at the state and local levels for the planning and administration of community education programs, how these competencies could be effectively acquired, and existing training opportunities available with respect to community education; and (4) to develop an appropriate training curriculum and training materials which would become broadly available for the training of community leaders, administrators, related personnel, or community teams at LEA's and SEA's.

In 1976 and 1977 the Community Education Program awarded a total of 24 community education project grants to institutions of higher education under the Act. Thirteen projects were funded during the first program year and 11 during the second year. Six IHE's were funded both years, making a total of 18 different IHE's which were funded during the first two years of this program.

A. Summary of Major Findings

Each of the six refunded institutions had established a record in community education, and in each the grants were made to permit the implementation of activities judged useful in the context of the developmental strategy set forth in the Community Schools Act and subsequent federal policy and regulations. At these institutions, the project activities were a supplement to other, ongoing community education endeavors supported directly by the IHE or by other funding sources.

More specifically, at Texas A & M University, the project was to provide training to community education staff of state education agencies. At Arizona State University the project was to develop materials related to community education competencies which would be useful in training at the local level. At Miami-Dade Community College the grant was to provide staff support to a citizens' training academy which would service community education staff of the Dade County schools and serve as a model for involvement of community colleges, as well as directly benefit the citizens of Dade County, Florida. The other three projects -- at Ball State University, the University of Syracuse, and the University of Virginia -- were to provide

training to state and local practitioners. In each case, however, the training and technical assistance approach differed, as did the geographic scope of the areas covered. The University of Virginia primarily used a workshop format in providing training to persons in a seven-state region. Ball State, on the other hand, provided more intensive, onsite assistance to nine selected school districts in a four-state area. The project at Syracuse used a combination of training and assistance modes in providing service to schools throughout the state of New York.

Although the specific goals of the six refunded IHE's were quite different, there were areas of common focus. Five of the six projects indicated that increasing the awareness of community education and increasing community education related skills of people in local school districts were among their major objectives. A different five indicated that increasing interagency coordination relevant to community education was also a major objective of their project. In one case (Texas A & M University) the project focused on the areas of community education awareness and skill building, but exclusively at the state education agency level. In the other (Arizona State University) the focus of the project was on developing materials in the area of community education competencies. Thus, although the six projects differed in many respects, there were areas of common purpose which permit some meaningful comparisons to be made.

Project Resources

The size of federal grants to the IHE's the first program year ranged from a low of $18,471 (Arizona State) to a high of $70,080 (Texas A & M), with the others falling in the $30,000 - $40,000 range. The second year the grants were only slightly higher with the low being $19,283 and the high $77,884. The others continued in the $30,000 to $40,000 range.

In addition to federal funds, five of the IHE's reported receiving personnel or material support from institutions or organizations other than their own university for the implementation of the federally supported project. This support included staff, facilities, and supplies and equipment. Four of the IHE's reported receiving all three types of support from their institutions and, to a lesser degree, from their state education agency.

Advisory Council and Needs Assessment

All six projects reported they received advice or guidance from an advisory council, with half of the councils being project specific (i.e., working only with the federal community education project) and half having other responsibilities as well. On the average, the councils had been in existence for over four years,

although two were started since the initial federal grant. The councils had approximately nine members. Five of the IHE's project directors listed significant contributions affecting the direction or operation of the project made by the advisory council in the past year. For example, the councils had been helpful in such areas as building good community relations for the project and in helping the project staff in planning and implementing programs. In addition to utilizing the advice of their councils, five IHE projects conducted an initial needs assessment specifically for the federal community education project. Four of these projects involved persons from SEA's, LEA's and other agencies in conducting the assessment.

Allocation of Staff Time

Across the six projects, the largest proportion of project supported staff time (43%) was devoted to planning and implementing conferences for relatively large groups; these involved participants from six or more state or local agencies and were directed primarily toward increasing awareness of community education among the participants. The second largest block of staff time was devoted to conducting workshops and seminars (34%). The remaining time was spent on such other activities as the development of materials.

Two IHE's reported that most of their time was devoted to conferences; they spent over 90% of their time in this endeavor. The other IHE's divided their time somewhat more equally among the three types of activities (conferences, workshops and seminars, and individualized consultations). Arizona State (25%) and Ball State (14%) were the only projects to report devoting more than 5% of their project supported staff time to other than one of these three major types of activities.

Project Activities

All six projects supported conferences or workshops (the distinction between the two was not always clear) and three reported devoting substantial time to individualized consultations. In total, the projects sponsored 127 conferences and workshops, with the range being from five to 46 per project; they averaged two days in duration. Since standardized record keeping had not been required of the projects, project directors could only estimate the numbers of people who had attended project events or received individualized consultations. Using these figures, which were all labeled as a "close approximation," about 4,500 persons attended conferences and workshops and 430 received individualized consultations.

In addition to sponsoring conferences, workshops and providing direct technical assistance, one-half of the IHE's reported having developed community education curricula or training materials as part of their federally supported community education project. Also reported were the development of competency lists for local community education staff, the development of evaluation instruments, and the conducting of surveys to be utilized for planning and coordination of community education at the local level.

Project Results: Project Directors' Assessment

According to the project directors, there were a variety of positive results from the federally funded activities. Specifically, two-thirds of the project directors reported that they had accomplished or almost accomplished all of the objectives in their first year federal grant, and all reported they had fully accomplished at least some. The directors also reported that attitudes at the state and local levels toward community education had improved, and that their institutions were working more closely with state and local agencies.

In addition, four projects listed an objective directly relating to helping local school districts begin or expand community education programs; these projects reported a total of 34 new and 36 expanded local projects because of the federally supported activities.* When asked to list what they considered most important, other impacts cited by a third or more of the project directors included:

- more trained leaders in local school districts;
- more trained leaders in other agencies;
- more awareness of community education in other agencies; and
- more interagency cooperation at the local level.

Project Results: Associates' Assessment

Visits were made to four IHE projects to supplement the project directors' perceptions. At these sites a total of 34 project and other IHE staff and members of the project advisory councils were interviewed. These persons generally supported the project directors' perceptions of project results. Almost all, for example, corroborated the project directors' assessment that there had been improvements in the attitudes of university staff, state, and local people toward community education. They also reported that as a result of project supported activities the universities were working more closely with state and local agencies with respect to community education.

*Although claimed as a project result by the directors, it should be noted that this had been a long standing objective of most of these projects and attribution of these new local programs primarily to federally supported activities would be inappropriate.

Project Results: Individual Clients' Assessment

Following the site visits, a random sample of people identified by the four visited projects as having received training or technical assistance were interviewed by telephone. Most of these 188 clients reported that they had found the assistance they received to have been quite helpful, and most cited examples of things they were doing differently as a result of the assistance they received. The most frequently given examples of ways in which they were acting differently related to: (a) coordination of interagency resources, (b) community education program planning, and (c) citizen and community involvement in community education.

Various analyses were performed to determine whether client ratings of the usefulness of training were related either to specific projects or to client characteristics. The ratings for one project were found to be significantly below the rest; however, no conclusions regarding the quality or effectiveness of that project's training are appropriate. This is because significant relationships between ratings of usefulness and three client characteristics also were found which confound the project level analyses. These apparently more salient analyses showed that training was rated most useful by clients who:

- received the greatest number of days of assistance (the average was five days per person, but the range was from 1 to 128);
- received assistance over a relatively narrow range of topics (out of a field of eight broad areas addressed); and
- were currently involved with a community education program.

B. Conclusions

The major conclusion to be drawn from the analyses of IHE project data is that the anticipated project activities occurred and were judged to have been of benefit to community education practitioners in the field. More specifically, the accumulated data from the directors of the six refunded projects plus the other university staff and the random sample of recipients of training and assistance from the four visited projects, permit concluding that the projects had positive impacts at the institutional and at the individual level as well.

Within the IHE's themselves, some positive changes were reported. According to project directors and university staff, some new relationships were established and others improved. However, all data considered, the impact on the university was almost entirely confined to the community education staff and some other specific individuals. Consistent with the purposes of the Act and with the IHE grant proposals, the focus of project activity was on the state and local levels.

At these levels there clearly were positive results. Conferences and workshops were held, individualized consultations provided, and the majority of recipients not only reported they found this assistance useful, they could even cite examples of something they were doing differently as a result. At the state level, for example, two SEA project directors singled out as especially valuable the assistance they had received in developing a state plan, and one reported that this state now has an endorsed and implemented state community education plan, at least in part because of the assistance the IHE provided. At the local level, there were a host of specific examples relating to project planning, community involvement and interagency coordination. One of the LEA project directors, for example, stressed the importance of university sponsored training events as a way to initially involve key local citizens and agency representatives, first with the concept and then with his program.

From a slightly different perspective, the data also lead to the conclusion that IHE's can function successfully in a variety of training and assistance modes. Each of the four visited projects adopted quite different approaches, and at least three of them were rated equally well by their clients.* Rather than the importance of overall project design, what emerges from the client data are findings which indicate that training is judged most useful when it is relatively narrow in scope and provided over a relatively extended period of time.

Overall, then, the data suggest that the IHE portion of the program was successful. Almost all project specific objectives were attained, and training and assistance to state and/or local practitioners was provided by all of the refunded projects. More importantly, positive results from these efforts were reported to have occurred at the state and local levels, and to a lesser extent within the universities as well. The only serious reservations to this assessment are those imposed by the limitations of the available quantitative data and the potential for some positive bias in the response of some of the people interviewed. On balance, it seems safe to conclude that the basic purpose of the university level portion of the Community Schools Act funded activities was met.

*The fourth received a significantly lower rating, but as elsewhere discussed, this may be due to the special characteristic of its clients; i.e., relatively few were currently involved with a community education program.

CHAPTER 4: SEA PROJECTS: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The Community Schools Act authorizes grants to state education agencies (SEA's) to: (1) plan and provide developmental and technical assistance to one or more community education programs; and to (2) plan, establish, expand, improve or maintain one or more community education programs which they directly administer through public elementary or secondary schools.

In 1976 and 1977, thirty-eight SEA's received project grants under the Act, with twenty-seven receiving grants in both years. All of the grants were to provide developmental and technical assistance, and it appeared that this was viewed by the SEA's as their primary role. Indeed, in 1976 only one SEA applied for funds to administer a project directly, and over 90% of the refunded project directors surveyed* reported that increasing the levels of skills and awareness and increasing the number of community education projects in their states were among their major project objectives. Over half (58%) cited one of these as the most important objective of their projects.

A. Summary of Major Findings

When the initial federal grants were made in July 1976, slightly over half (15) of the SEA's surveyed had a state office of community education, but most (16) did not have a state plan or policy statement and only seven of the refunded states had community education legislation. A year and a half later (January 1978), 25% of those without a plan or policy had one written and adopted, and another 25% had one written but not yet approved. In addition, in one of the states with a newly approved state policy there was also new state legislation and in a second there was a line item for community education in the state budget. In another state, one with neither officially adopted plans or policy, community education legislation was pending. In all nine of these states (i.e., in one-third of the refunded projects), the project directors reported that these changes in the state policy context were almost entirely attributable to staff and activities supported through the federal program.

Project Resources

The federal grants to SEA's ranged from $22,673 to $81,800 for the first program year, and from $27,404 to $71,206 for the second, with the median grant being $45,520 and $43,358 for the two years, respectively. The staff of most of the projects consisted of one full-time professional and a full-time or part-time secretary, although eight of the projects involved two or three professional

*Data for this report came from 26 of the 27 directors of refunded projects who responded to the mail survey and from SEA staff, clients, and related agency personnel associated with the five projects which were visited.

staff on at least a part-time basis. On the average, the directors of the projects had been employed by their SEA for three years and most had been the director of the project from the time federal funding began. All but one of the directors reported having received training as a result of the Community Education Program grant to Texas A&M University and 65% (17) reported receiving additional community education training from other universities as well.

Advisory Councils

The Community Schools Act requires that all SEA projects provide for the active and continuous involvement, on an advisory basis, of broadly representative institutions, groups, and individuals in the planning, implementation and evaluation of program services and activities. In complying with this requirement, nineteen (73%) of the refunded projects had advisory councils, and the others used informal procedures to secure outside advice. Of the nineteen councils, seven were solely concerned with community education and twelve had broader program responsibilities. On the average, the councils had seventeen members and represented a broad cross-section of state and local officials and community members. In some cases the councils made a significant contribution to the project and the development of community education in the state, while in others their role was quite perfunctory. Seventy-four percent of the project directors with advisory councils could cite at least one example of a contribution the council had made to the project over the past year, and 26% could not.

Project Activities

Most of the project directors reported that over 75% of project staff time was devoted to planning and implementing conferences, workshops, and individual consultations, with staff in 58% of the projects devoting between a quarter and a half of their time to individual consultations. In total, the refunded SEA's reported they sponsored approximately: (a) 239 conferences which were attended by about 9,250 people; (b) 286 training sessions and workshops attended by about 4,900 people; and (c) 1,065 individualized consultations serving about 6,641 persons. Over 90% of the projects reported having engaged in all three of these activities and all engaged in at least two. The majority of the participants in these activities were associated with local school districts, with other major groups being staff of various state agencies and college and university personnel. Besides these, other frequently reported activities were the development of community education curricula and training materials, dissemination of information, and liaison with state and local agencies.

Project Results: Project Directors' Assessment

According to the project directors, a variety of specific impacts resulted from the federally supported project activities. More specifically, 23 directors reported an increase in the number of LEA's with community education projects and 22 reported the expansion of existing LEA projects due to the SEA community education project. In all, 258 new programs and 381 expanded programs were reported. Other impacts reported by the SEA project directors included:

- Improvement in the attitudes toward community education of SEA staff, local schools' staff, and community leaders;
- Increased cooperation regarding community education between the SEA and (1) other state agencies, (2) nongovernmental agencies and associations, and (3) colleges and universities; and
- Policy changes within the state supportive of community education, sometimes accompanied by new or increased funding.

Project Results: Associates' Assessment

To supplement the project directors' perceptions, visits were made to five representative SEA projects. At these sites, a total of 25 project staff, other SEA staff and members of the project advisory council were interviewed. These persons supported the project directors' perception of project impacts. Ninety-six percent of these respondents reported changes for the better in attitude toward community education of people who come into contact with the project, and seventy-seven percent noted greater interagency cooperation as a result of the project. On the other hand, when asked directly, 24% (6) did report some negative effects of the project, five citing some interdepartmental conflict and one mentioning resources being diverted from other programs. Overall, however, 15 SEA associates had a very positive impression of the community education project, 9 had a positive impression and one had no opinion.

Project Results: State Agencies' Assessments

Forty staff from forty private and public agencies related to the SEA community education project were interviewed during the five site visits. Because they were cited in federal policy statements, in each site these included staff from the agencies responsible for parks and recreation, health, aging, human resources, and community colleges. In addition, staff from three agencies identified by the project director were interviewed. There was no significant difference in the responses from the various types of agencies. Eighty-five percent of those interviewed reported cooperation between their agency and the SEA because of the community education

project, and 85% also reported their agency received assistance from the community education project in the past year. They cited assistance in such areas as program and service planning, facilitation of interaction with other agencies, and obtaining additional resources. Seventy-seven percent reported that the attitudes of staff from their and other agencies toward community education have changed for the better, and 60% reported improvement in cooperation between their agency and other agencies, including local school districts. Their overall impression of the SEA community education project was divided equally between positive and very positive.

Project Results: Individual Clients' Assessment

Following the site visits, a random sample of people identified by the projects as having received training or other assistance were interviewed by telephone. Most of the clients in each of the projects responded very positively to questions about the assistance they received, although there were some who did not acknowledge receiving any training or assistance from the state. Across the five projects, 70% of the clients said they had noticed an increase in the efforts made by their SEA to work with them on community education activities in the past year, and 76% cited examples of new or different things they were doing because of the assistance they received. Primarily, their examples related to the areas of project planning, citizen and community involvement, and coordination of resources. The number of days of assistance and the breadth of topics covered in the training sessions were both positively correlated to the rating clients gave to the training, thus strengthening the indications that the training did have an effect.

Consistency of Findings

In summary, the results of the SEA projects are quite positive. Indeed, because such findings are rarely encountered in assessments of federal programs, the study design and procedures were reviewed for sources of bias and contamination and the data were analyzed from several perspectives. Included in this process were reviews of narrative descriptions and qualitative assessments of each of the visited projects and debriefing sessions with all the members of the study team.

On balance, a remarkable consistency in the data was found. This consistency goes beyond the confirmation of the project directors' assessments by other SEA staff, staff from other agencies, and the random sample of individual recipients of project sponsored assistance. It also includes the qualitative assessments of the professional evaluators who visited five SEA sites and also discussed the SEA projects during their visits to projects sponsored by local school districts and universities in the course of other aspects of the study. Finally, it includes the response of the project staff and their associates and clients to this assessment. The 96% mail survey response rate coupled with the willingness of staff from state and local agencies to discuss the projects at some length all lend support to the positive findings reported above.

B. Conclusions

The major conclusion to be drawn from the preceeding analysis is that the legislative mandate for the SEA aspect of the community education program was met. State level community education services were increased, substantial numbers of people received developmental and technical assistance, and these federally supported efforts did have desired impacts at the local level. More specifically:

- SEA services in community education increased.

  Eleven new community education offices were established and of the fifteen pre-established offices, 10 increased the size of staff, 10 increased the geographic area served, and 14 increased the number of people served as a result of the federal grant. Of the 26 reporting projects, all provided consultative assistance, all but one reported offering training sessions and workshops (approximately 286 sessions attended by 4,900 persons), and all but two reported sponsoring large conferences (a total of 239 attended by about 9,250 people). Of the sample of 183 project clients surveyed, 70% reported they noticed an increase in the efforts of the SEA to work with their agencies in the area of community education, with 54% reporting a great deal of increased effort.

- Awareness increased and attitudes improved at both the state and local levels.

  Ninety-six percent of SEA staff and others associated with the projects at the five visited sites reported positive attitude changes among people who came into contact with the project. Such changes were also reported by project directors and by most staff of related state agencies interviewed.

- There were new and expanded local programs in almost every state surveyed.

  The 26 SEA directors reported there were 258 new and 381 expanded local programs at least partially due to the efforts of the federally supported project. There was at least one expanded project reported in each state and at least one new project in 25 of the 26 states reporting.

- Project training and assistance was generally well received and has made a difference at the local level.

  Seventy-six percent of the 183 clients surveyed cited examples of things they were doing differently as a result of the training or assistance they received, and 80% characterized the SEA efforts as either "quite helpful" or "critical" to their efforts. The examples were primarily in the areas of project planning, citizen

involvement, and coordination of resources. Only 4% characterized SEA services as of little or no value.

From a slightly different perspective, it is also possible to conclude that the SEA projects had desired effects on the state education agencies, the state and local "community" being served, and individual recipients of state sponsored training and technical assistance. More specifically:

- The state level program had an impact on the SEA's receiving project grants.

  In addition to establishing new offices in some states and increasing the level of pre-existing activities in others, policy changes included legislation, state plans, budgetary support, and patterns of interagency cooperation and support.

- The state level program had an impact on the state and local "community."

  In addition to developing and/or expanding local programs in all the surveyed states, the projects contributed to improved coordination and cooperation among state agencies. Over two-thirds of the 26 project directors cited improved interagency coordination as a major impact of their project, and 85% of the 40 representatives of related state agencies interviewed at the five visited projects reported increased cooperation with the SEA; 60% of the 40 agency personnel went on to report that the community education project had contributed to an increase in their cooperation and coordination with other agencies as well.

- The state level program had an impact on individual recipients of project related training and technical assistance.

  Most of the 183 project clients were satisfied with the training and assistance they received and over three-quarters cited examples of things they were doing differently (see above).

While the overall program purpose was achieved, there were some common weaknesses in project administration and operations. Project related recordkeeping and reporting were typically weak, in several states there was little meaningful involvement in the project from representative groups and individuals, and there was little coordination among state, college and university, and school level community education projects. More specifically:

- Quantitative data on project activities were not consistently available.

  Only five (21%) of the 26 projects indicated they had actual counts of the number of people who attended project sponsored conferences and only 4 (17%) had figures for those attending workshops; the other projects provided either "close approximations" or "rough estimates" when asked for information in these areas. Information on the type of participants at project sponsored events was even less precise. It should be noted that the projects had not been requested to keep and report such information to the Office of Education. Also, some project directors commented that they had some quantitative information in other reporting categories and that the Community Education Program should provide a standard set of definitions for reporting purposes.

- An adequate basis for analyzing project costs was not available in most projects; this was true partially because fiscal, especially expenditure, data were not readily available to, or used by, many project directors.

  Six (23%) of the 26 reporting project directors did not provide data on either the federal or the non-federal grant expenditures for the first project year; for the first quarter of the second year, nine (35%) did not provide federal expenditure data and ten (38%) did not provide expenditure data for the non-federal share. In addition, several project directors indicated that securing the fiscal information was the most time consuming part of the survey, since they had no fiscal information other than the grant proposal budget at hand. In almost every case, any attempt to relate federal and/or non-federal project expenditures to programatically important activities would be based on estimates or frequently on a very reluctantly given guess.

- Advisory councils and other mechanisms for securing active and continuous advice from representative groups and individuals were perfunctory in some projects.

  Some advisory councils played a significant role in project operations and in supporting community education in policy-making circles. However, in seven of the 26 projects there were no councils and in twelve others (46%) the councils' prime concern was not community education. Also, in five of the 19 projects with councils (26%), the project directors reported that they could not cite an example of a significant contribution their council had made to the project in the past year.

- There was a need in some states for increased coordination between the SEA, colleges and universities, and local school districts.

  In response to an open-ended question, 19% of the SEA project directors identified this as a major area of concern. It was also identified by half of the six university level project directors and three of the twenty (15%) local school district project directors surveyed. Some state directors suggested coordination might be accomplished by providing the SEA's the funds to make within-state grants, but no university or local school district director made such a suggestion.

With respect to federal level policy and operations, the SEA project directors were generally supportive of the Community Education Program and current policy and procedures. There was general approval of the pattern of federal funding by most respondents, with fewer than ten of 51 directors and associates citing either changes in the amount or duration of funding among their suggestions for improvement of the federal program. Regarding the operations of the federal office, almost all the reporting directors indicated that they had had considerable interaction with CEP and that this had been of value to their efforts. In general, they endorsed a continuation of present policies and operating styles, although they did indicate some additional technical assistance would be of value.

Overall, then, the data and analyses suggest that the SEA portion of the community education program was successful. The legislative mandate of delivering developmental training and assistance was achieved, and positive change occurred at both the state and local levels as a result of the program. Consistent with this overall conclusion is the endorsement by the SEA project directors of current federal policy and operating procedures. Given the range of perspectives obtained and analyses performed, the only serious reservations to this general assessment are the reminders that: (a) the program had no pre-established or objectively verifiable and generally agreed upon evaluation criteria, (b) the quality of available quantitative data is suspect, and (c) there is probably some positive bias in the responses of many of the people interviewed. Despite these reservations, however, there can be little doubt that in its first two years the program generated positive attitudes from both clients and knowledgeable observers and brought about some institutional change.

CHAPTER 5. LEA PROJECTS: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Grants to local education agencies (LEA's) were made to initiate, expand, or maintain local community education programs. The Community Education Program awarded 48 project grants to LEA's in FY 1976 and again in FY 1977. In total, grants were made to 76 different local projects, with 20 receiving federal funds in both the first and the second years.

A. Summary of Major Findings

In broad terms, the 20 refunded projects shared a common set of major project objectives. Although a review of first year project proposals showed considerable diversity with respect to the number and type of specific objectives, 90% of the project directors indicated that they shared the first three of the objectives listed in Exhibit 7 below, and most directors identified one of them as their single most important objective.

EXHIBIT 7

MAJOR OBJECTIVES OF COMMUNITY EDUCATION PROJECTS FUNDED IN BOTH 1976 AND 1977

OBJECTIVE	Cited As Major		Cited As Most Important	
	No.	%*	No.	%**
Coordinating existing community services/programs	19	95	3	15
Increasing community involvement in school and in other public decision-making	18	90	5	25
Expanding the use of schools	18	90	2	10
Providing educational services/programs to out-of-school youths and adults	15	75	3	15
Providing for the integration of and mutual reinforcement between the schools' regular and optional programs	13	75	1	5

*Due to multiple responses, percentages total more than 100 percent.

**Of the remaining 6 (30%) projects, 3 (15%) cited another objective as the most important, 2 (10%) stated that they were all equally important, and 1 (5%) did not respond.

Project Setting

Nine of the refunded projects were located in urban areas and 11 served rural communities and relatively small towns.* The projects were in 17 states and, as would be expected, the school districts participating in the projects differed considerably in terms of size.

When the initial federal grants were made in July 1976, there already was some form of a community education program operating in 80% of the participating school districts. The two oldest of these pre-established programs had begun in 1952 and 1955, and the rest had started between 1969 and 1976.**

In all 16 of the projects with pre-existing community education programs the federal grant provided for increasing the number of community education staff and services in the district. Almost all (89%) of these projects extended community education services to schools which had not previously been served, and over half (56%) expanded or intensified their services to schools already involved in community education.

Organizationally, there was considerable variation among the refunded projects. Although each involved at least one local school district in project planning and operations, five of the 20 grantees were not school districts themselves. Three of the grantees were consortia of two or more districts, one was a county department of parks and recreation, and one was a city department of human resources. In addition, 35% of the projects were part of a larger community education unit sponsored by the grantee, while 65% (13) of the projects constituted the grantee's entire community education program.

With respect to school board policies, by the time of this study in January 1978, all but one of the participating school districts had formally endorsed the concept of community education. Indeed, 60% (12) of them had done so prior to the award of the first federal grant.

Project Resources

The grant awards ranged in size from $11,981 to $53,526 the first year, and from $23,361 to $56,883 the second year. In both years the amount of federal funds received by most projects was somewhat less than the amount requested.***

*Urban was defined as being within a standard metropolitan statistical area as determined by the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

** The median age of the pre-existing efforts was two years old when the first federal grant was made.

*** Median amounts were $32,234 and $32,455 for years one and two, respectively; the median amount across both years awarded to a project was $32,532.

Almost all of the projects (95%) received personnel or material support from institutions/organizations other than their own agency. Eighty percent of the projects made use of individual volunteers from the community with the number ranging from five to 800 across the 16 projects. The next most frequently mentioned source of support were related community agencies which generally provided the projects with buildings or facilities (53%) and were also a major source of personnel (42%) and project supplies (47%).

The majority (80%) of the local projects administering community education programs also received cash support for community education other than what was provided by the federal grant. Excluding the funds generated by tuition/fees/user charges common to 81% (13) of the projects, the grantees themselves provided cash support in 69% (11) of the local projects. Other frequently mentioned sources of cash support were local government (43.8%) and community agencies (25%).

Training was provided to project staff and related community leaders by state education agencies and colleges/universities. Generally, the training was thought to be useful, and frequently it resulted in implemented procedures in the areas of: (1) project administration/leadership, (2) project planning, (3) citizen and community involvement, (4) coordination of interagency resources, and (5) development and/or acquisition of community education materials.

Project Staff

Across the 20 refunded LEA's, there was an average of 2.6 full-time and part-time professional staff supported by federal funds, but projects varied considerably with respect to staff size.* There were 11 (55%) full-time and nine part-time project directors. Four (44%) of the part-time directors also administered relatively large, nonfederally supported community education programs in their districts. The majority of the project directors (65%) had been employed by the grantee for two years or more. Project directors' training in community education varied from just workshop experiences (20%) to having earned academic degrees (15%), with the largest group (35%) reporting a combination of workshops and academic courses (but not degrees) pertaining to community education.

In addition to project directors, LEA programs included building coordinators as professional or semi-professional staff. In the 11 LEA projects visited there were 39 building coordinators associated with the federally supported activities; the number

*Because there was confusion in some projects about accounting for the non-federal share of total project budgets, the basis for counts of project staff was not always clear; thus, some projects may not have utilized the same reporting basis as did others, thereby affecting the quality of this information.

varied from one to 11 coordinators per project, but most projects (55%) employed two.

The majority of the building coordinators (64%) were employed full-time, and about half of them (49%) had taken community education courses. On the average, building coordinators were responsible for coordination of activities in 3.6 schools (the median number was 2.8). However, slightly over half (56%) of the coordinators supervised activities and services in only one school or center while others were responsible for activities in up to as many as 20 schools. Major responsibilities of building coordinators included: coordination/supervision of academic classes (31%), enrichment classes (95%), direct health/social service programs (77%), and recreational/social/cultural events (81%). Generally speaking, over half of all building coordinators interviewed indicated they spent from 10 to 20% of their time during the work week in either (a) program planning/scheduling activities, or (b) in locating and securing program resources/services.

Advisory Councils

All 20 (100%) project directors reported that their program received advice and guidance from one or more advisory councils. Some projects had separate councils for each school or neighborhood, while others had one overall council for the project. Also, some councils were concerned specifically with project related concerns while others included project related issues among a larger set of issues with which they were concerned. On the average, there were 4.8 councils per project, with the range being from one to 16. In about half (55%) of the projects, at least one council had existed prior to the award of the federal project grant, while in the rest (45%) all councils began as a result of the project.

The majority (75%) of the project directors described one or more specific contributions made by their councils within the past year and council chairpersons at the 11 visited sites generally corroborated these reports. According to their chairpersons, the councils were moderately to very involved in assessing community needs, program planning and development, and evaluating/assessing programs; they were least involved in preparing proposals. Many (47%) of the 38 chairpersons also mentioned specific community related projects as accomplishments of their councils.

Council membership generally included representatives from the project school or school district, community agencies, and the community at large. Most (83%) of the chairpersons interviewed reported that there were from six to 20 persons on their council, and that they were somewhat informal groups, with over half (52.6%) having no bylaws or written rules. Most councils (74%) met about once a month.

Of various ways of becoming a council member, the most frequently mentioned was by appointment (42%) by project or sponsoring agency staff. In general, council chairpersons were very involved in community work, with only nine (24%) persons interviewed indicating that this was their first experience as a council/board member of a civic organization. The typical chairperson was a woman between the ages of 22 and 64 years old who participated in more than one project activity. Most reported their primary reason for involvement with the project was to improve their community, and most were satisfied with the project.

Project Planning

In all the projects there was at least some community involvement in project planning and proposal development, although both the quantity and quality of involvement varied considerably. Most involved were community agencies (70%), advisory councils (65%), and school principals (60%), with less involvement from teachers and community residents not formally part of a project advisory council.

As a part of their program planning process, almost all the projects (85%) conducted a needs assessment of their service area after the federal project began. According to project directors, the people most involved were members of the advisory councils (94%) and staff of community agencies (77%). Interviews with the chairpersons of advisory councils indicated that they also considered themselves moderately to very involved in conducting needs and resource assessments (74%). However, only 37% of the representatives from community agencies reported that they were moderately to very involved in either process.

Project Activities

The 20 projects were generally engaged in similar activities. With varying degrees of emphasis, all devoted some effort toward increasing the number of educational and social services available in their communities and working with agency and citizen groups. As summarized in Exhibit 8 below, all the projects supported the provision of enrichment (i.e., non-credit) classes in their community and almost all supported other types of recreational, social and cultural programs and facilitated the provision of direct health and social services. Significantly fewer projects assisted their school district and/or local college or university to provide classes for academic credit; typically this was done where the adult education program of the school district was new or lacking in staff. In 55% of the projects, special school programs for the handicapped, limited-English speakers, and other special needs groups had also been supported.

EXHIBIT 8

MAJOR PROJECT SUPPORTED ACTIVITIES BY
NUMBER AND PERCENT OF REFUNDED LEA PROJECTS

ACTIVITY	No.	Percent
Enrichment classes	20	100
Recreational/social/cultural programs	18	90
Direct health and social services programs	17	85
Academic classes	11	55

Most projects (80%) also provided assistance to interagency committees or councils and other community groups. Typically, project staff handled logistical arrangements, kept records, and otherwise assisted as much as possible, but were not among the formal officers of the groups.

Reliable estimates of the number of persons who participated in project sponsored activities could not be obtained. In some projects recordkeeping of most sorts had a low priority and in others the lack of a common definitional and reporting framework made meaningful aggregation of the data impossible.

Eight Minimum Elements

The LEA projects were required to plan their programs in accordance with eight minimum elements of a community education program which were established as federal policy (see page 3). Based on information from the 20 project directors, most of the elements were present in all the projects, and over 80% of the projects had almost all. Based on the data from the visits to 11 sites, each element was either present or being worked toward in each of the projects.

Project Results: Project Staff's Assessment

According to the project directors, there were a variety of positive results associated with the federal projects. They reported that 77% of the project objectives listed in their first year grant proposals were accomplished or almost accomplished. Furthermore, the directors indicated that there had been:

- increased citizen involvement,
- increased interagency cooperation, and
- increased community support for schools.

Various analyses of project director responses showed that a change in the community support for schools was negatively related to the number of classes offered and positively related to citizen involvement. Citizen involvement was also negatively related to the number of classes offered. Thus, from the project directors' perspective, emphasis on citizen involvement was more positively associated with community support for schools than was providing relatively large number of academic or enrichment classes.

The analyses also indicated that the eight minimum elements score was positively related to citizen involvement and to interagency cooperation; that is, projects with high citizen involvement and those with high interagency cooperation scores tended to score highly on the measures of the presence of the eight minimum elements. In addition, interagency cooperation was also related to the administrative location of the project and to whether or not services were offered to special needs groups. When the project was part of a larger community education program or division (i.e., had the benefit of additional support and prestige), there tended to be greater interagency cooperation than when the project was not part of such a unit; these projects also tended to have programs specially designed for special needs groups (again, perhaps because the overall size of the community education effort in the district made it possible). There was, however, a negative relationship between a project being part of a larger community education program and the number of community groups and interagency committees which were assisted. It is not clear from the information at hand whether this was because there are others (i.e., community education staff not associated directly with the federal project) filling this function or because these larger programs tended to put less emphasis on community organization efforts. The field visit data indicate that both situations exist.

At the visited projects, building level staff ("coordinators") also were asked for their assessments of the project. Their overall impressions were also quite positive. Particular areas of project impact cited by most coordinators were: (a) increased openness of school facilities for community use, (b) increased community services, (c) increased contributions from the community to the schools, (d) increased community participation in the schools and (e) increased community support for the schools. Interestingly, those coordinators responsible for only one school building reported significantly more positive overall impressions of their project and were also more positive with respect to the measure of increased community services than were coordinators who were responsible for more than one building.

Project Results: School Personnel Assessments

To supplement staff perceptions, there were interviews with various categories of school personnel. At each of the visited projects interviews were conducted with the superintendent of schools, a knowledgeable member of the school board, the principals at schools involved with the project, and a random sample of teachers who had been at these schools two years or more. Overall, the majority in each group gave quite positive accounts. Over 70% of the superintendents and board members reported that because of the project there had been: (a) increased community involvement in schools, (b) improved relations between the schools and community agencies, and (c) more activities available for community residents.

The overall impression of the 55 school principals interviewed was also quite positive, with elementary school principals being the most favorable. More specifically, 85% reported that their buildings were open more for community use as a result of the project; 80% reported that because of the project additional resources had been made available to the staff and students at their school; and 77% reported that there were changes in the types of cooperation and communication between their school and other agencies because of project activities. In addition, 52% of the principals reported that school-community cooperation had improved because of the project and slightly less than half cited relatively specific changes in the type and extent of involvement of school staff with the community.

Of 167 teachers interviewed, 46% (76) had been directly involved in the community education project as a teacher, participant, or volunteer. Of these 167 teachers, 65% reported that since the project began, additional resources had been made available to their students in the form of enrichment opportunities, community volunteers, or classroom learning materials; 56% of the teachers reported that the community education project had had positive effects on students' attitudes toward school. In addition, 64% of the teachers reported that there had been increased community involvement in the schools since the time the project began.

Project Results: Participants' Reactions

Interviews were conducted with 38 chairpersons of project advisory councils and with 352 other community residents who were participating in one or more project supported activities. Over 90% of both groups said they were satisfied or very

satisfied with project services.* Fewer, but more than two-thirds, indicated that they felt more comfortable going to school activities than they had one or two years before; they also indicated that they took more advantage of school sponsored activities than before. In addition, over three-quarters of the community residents indicated that they felt communication between the community and schools had improved and 64% said they felt they had more influence over the kinds of programs offered.

Although the advisory council chairpersons tended to be quite positive in their overall attitudes toward the projects, their responses to specific items seeking opinions regarding community change tended to be least positive of the groups included in the survey. Specifically, 42% reported that they believed there was an improvement in school-community relations and 55% reported that there was either some or considerable improvement in interagency cooperation because of the project. Though the reasons for their relatively lower ratings are not clear from the data, it may be that these responses reflect the combination of their relatively extensive prior community experience and some measure of disappointment because not all their expectations for the projects had been attained. More so than any respondents except staff, council chairpersons would be aware of project failures and opportunities missed.

Project Results: Community Agencies' Assessments

Staff from 91 community agencies were interviewed in the 11 visited sites. Because they were mentioned in federal policy statements, in each site these included staff from the agencies responsible for: parks and recreation, health, aging, human resources, and community colleges. In addition, staff from up to five other agencies identified by the project director were interviewed. Responses among types of agencies were compared with respect to indicators of their involvement with the community education program and their assessments of project results. No significant differences among types of agencies in either area were found.

With respect to results, 81% of the respondents reported that their agency had been assisted by project staff, at least with respect to publicizing their services or jointly sponsoring community events. In addition, 78% said that project staff had facilitated an interagency network of services and 56% described positive changes in interagency coordination and co-operation which were attributable primarily or entirely to the project. Overall, 58% of the staff of these community agencies reported having positive or very positive attitudes toward community education.

*Typieally, community residents defined the project in terms of specific activity(ies) in which they were engaged; since these were almost always voluntary and designed to be enjoyable, this is not a surprising response.

Consistency of Findings

On balance, a remarkable consistency in the data was found. This consistency goes beyond the confirmation of the project directors' assessments by other LEA staff, staff from other agencies, and the sample of individual participants in project sponsored activities. It also includes the qualitative assessments of the professional evaluators who visited 11 LEA sites and also discussed the LEA projects during their visits to projects sponsored by states and universities in the course of other aspects of the study.

B. Conclusions

The major conclusion to be drawn from the preceding is that the legislative mandate and primary federal policy directives for the LEA portion of the community education program were met. Further, the common major objectives of improving coordination of services, increasing community involvement in school and other public decision-making, and expanding the use of school facilities were achieved. In addition to these broad and common objectives, most of the project-specific expectations set forth in the first year grant documents were accomplished as well. More specific conclusions which may be drawn from the study include:

- Use of school facilities for community activities increased as a result of the projects.

  According to 85% of the principals interviewed, because of the project school buildings were open for community use an average of 11 more hours a week during the regular school year. Although corroborating numerical estimates were not reliably available, 85% of the building level project staff at these same projects also reported an increase in the hours available for community use each weekday, and 79% reported an increase in the number of days each week.

- Project supported services were used and valued by members of the community.

  A variety of educational, social, recreational and cultural activities were provided to a broad spectrum of community residents, often for the first time. In 85% of the projects these activities were provided in response to structured assessments of community needs, and in the 11 visited projects, 94% of the community residents participating in project activities reported that they were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the services offered through the project.

- Citizen involvement in schools increased.

  Overall, the 20 project directors reported that there had been an increase in the extent of citizen involvement in project schools. In addition, 71% of the school principals and 68% (26) of the chairpersons of project advisory councils reported increased involvement. Also, 64% of the community residents participating in project activities reported that they felt they had more influence over the kinds of programs offered to members of the community than they did one or two years ago.

- Cooperation between schools and other community agencies increased.

  Overall, the 20 project directors reported that there had been slightly more than some change for the better in the level of cooperation between agencies in their communities because of project activities. This view was corroborated by staff of community agencies and other school personnel. Seventy-eight percent of the 91 staff of community agencies interviewed reported that the community education staff had been either somewhat successful or very successful in building a network of cooperating agencies to support and implement community education in the past year. In addition, 93% of the school superintendents and school board members and 84% of the school principals interviewed at these sites reported that the level of cooperation between the schools and other governmental agencies had increased.

- Community support for schools increased.

  Almost all (95%) of the project directors reported that because of project activities there was at least some improvement in the level of community support for schools. At the visited projects these reports were corroborated by 90% of the school superintendents and board members, 91% of the school principals, and 70% of the staff of other community agencies. In addition, 64% of the responding teachers in these communities reported that there had been an increase in community support for schools over the time of the project, and 76% of the community residents participating in project activities indicated that communication between the schools and the community improved over the same period of time.

From a slightly different perspective, one can also conclude that there were positive impacts from the projects on the local education systems, other aspects of the project communities, and individual community residents. More specifically:

- The community education program had desired impacts on local educational systems, both with respect to school level and district level policies and with respect to the operation of the regular (K-12) school program.

  As indicated above, there were changes in most of the school districts with respect to: the extent of citizen involvement in the schools and school decision-making, school-agency coordination and cooperation, and the availability of school facilities for community use. In addition, according to 20% of the project directors, a major result of their project was an improved K-12 program. Further, 89% (49) of the principals and 65% (108) of the classroom teachers reported that there had been increased resources for teachers; they also reported increased interaction between the teaching staff and the local community, and improved attitudes of students toward school.

- The community education program had desired impacts on local communities apart from its impacts on schools.

  Most of the community agency staff interviewed reported their agencies had been assisted by the projects and that the projects had facilitated interagency cooperation. Further, project staff, advisory council chairpersons and members of community groups interviewed reported useful assistance having been provided to community and neighborhood organizations.

- The community education program had desired impacts on individual members of the community.

  Responses from individuals participating in project supported activities indicated not only that most were satisfied, but that they felt more comfortable going to school activities and took more advantage of activities offered by the schools than they did prior to the project. Almost all the advisory council chairpersons and most (64%) of the other

community residents interviewed also indicated that they felt they had more influence over the kinds of programs offered to the community than prior to the project. From a different point of view, over half of the teachers reported that the project had had positive effects on student attitudes toward school.

From a program management perspective, several other conclusions emerge from the data. As with the state level projects discussed earlier, these include the observation that an adequate basis for analyzing project costs was not available. As with the SEA's, this was true in some cases because project directors simply did not have expenditure data readily enough available to include them in their otherwise complete response to the mail questionnaire. More typically, however, it was because the information that was available simply was not in a form which permitted establishing meaningful relationships to program activity categories. Closely related, it may also be concluded that:

- Reliable data on project participants, changes in hours of building use, and other potentially quantifiable dimensions of project activity and results were not consistently available.

  Project records were such that reliable estimates of the number of persons served at the local level could not be obtained. In some projects, recordkeeping of most sorts was a very low priority. In others, there were reasonably good records, but information from one project frequently could not be combined with information from the next. All projects were plagued with the complexity of operationally defining project participation -- some keeping records by type of activity, some by geographic location or facility (i.e., neighborhood, school, or center), and most with only half-hearted commitment, since there were no meaningful rewards or punishments associated with doing so.

From a slightly more operational point of view, the data on project advisory councils are of interest. First, it may be concluded from the responses of the project directors and the council chairpersons that the councils generally do function and do make a worthwhile contribution to project operations. Second, the data suggest that they tend to be led by the traditional school-community citizen leadership, rather than new elements, citizens who were previously uninvolved. According to the council chairpersons, the typical

way of joining a council was to be asked by a member of the project staff, and most chairpersons had previous office-holding experience in a school or other civic organization. On the one hand, this may be a factor in the effectiveness of the councils, but on the other it may be a disappointment to those community educators who view the councils as a means for developing new leadership; if the latter is occurring (and despite this limited data it may well be), the new leaders have yet to take command.

Also from a programmatic perspective, two final conclusions may be reached. These are:

- The "Minimum Elements" of a community education program are attainable and appropriate.

  All or almost all of the eight minimum elements were present in most of the refunded projects and those not present were being worked on in the rest. Further, neither in response to the mail survey nor in discussion with project directors or others, were criticisms or negative comments made about the elements in general or individual elements in particular.

- There is no one most effective model for implementing a community education program.

  High levels of activity and positive results were associated with each of seven empirically derived types or clusters of projects.* Similarly, there was no significant difference between projects on the basis of urban-rural setting, type of sponsoring institution, and type of community advisory council. Also, there was little substantive difference between projects which assigned one staff coordinator to a school and those which assigned coordinators to several schools, although the coordinators reported that in one of three impact measures it was significantly more effective to have one staff assigned to a school rather than having staff divided among several schools.

Overall, then, the data and analyses suggest that the LEA portion of the community education program was successful. In accordance with federal legislation and policy, local programs and services were initiated and expanded. As a result, there were positive

*Selected variables were analyzed and seven clusters or types of projects were identified. However, since the typology did not explain differences in project results or provide other particularly meaningful insights, it is discussed only in the technical supplement to this report.

impacts on schools, the community at large, and individual citizens. While the results of the study are clearly quite positive, there were, however, some areas of common weakness in project administration which remain to be resolved. As mentioned in preceding chapters, the analyses were limited by the absence of pre-established evaluation criteria, the absence of potentially useful quantitative data, and the potential for bias among some of those responding to the various questionnaires. Despite these reservations, however, the consistency of the data from all sources leaves little doubt that desired results were achieved.

CHAPTER 6. RESULTS OF ONLY ONE YEAR OF FEDERAL FUNDING

Responding to a considerable interest in determining what had happened to the community education projects that were funded only in the first year of the federal program, a survey of the non-refunded projects was incorporated into the study design. Mail or telephone responses were received from a short questionnaire directed to representatives (community education directors or supervisors) from all 40 grantees which administered a community education project supported by the Community Education Program during the period between July 1, 1976, and June 30, 1977. The purpose in contacting these grantees was three-fold: (1) to inquire about how project activities and services had continued, if at all; (2) to inquire about any impact the federal project may have had; and (3) to inquire about any suggestions they might have for improving federal grant policies and procedures. This chapter summarizes the results of this aspect of the study.

Current Status

Exhibit 9 below shows the current status of community education activities which were funded during the first program year. Overall, 85% (34) of the grantees were reported to have continued project related activities and services. Indeed, 25% (2) of the IHE's, 20% of the SEA's, and 33% (9) of the LEA grantees were reported to have expanded project activities and services.

EXHIBIT 9

Operating Status of Non-Refunded Projects: February 1978

Type Grantee	Activities/Services Have:									
	Discontinued		Decreased		Not Changed		Expanded		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
IHE	0	0	6	75	0	0	2	25	8	100
SEA	2	40	2	40	0	0	1	20	5	100
LEA	4	15	8	30	6	22	9	33	27	100
TOTAL	6	15	16	40	6	15	12	30	40	100

It is interesting that 55% of the grantees (7 IHE's, 2 SEA's, and 13 LEA's) did have community education programs before July 1, 1976, while 45% did not, and that this is not statistically related to the current continuation of project related activities and services. It is also interesting that 83% (33) of the non-refunded grantees sought refunding from CEP for 1977-78. Of the seven grantees which did not

seek federal money, only one (an LEA) indicated no need; it reported that local funds were presently supporting project activities and services.

With respect to how they were continuing, 83% (33) of the respondents provided some information regarding sources of financial support being used to continue some level of project activities since the termination of federal funding. Of these, 68% reported that they were receiving at least some support from their own agency. The most frequently other cited source of support was the general local government (56%), although the C.S. Mott Foundation was cited by a majority of IHE's.

Based on the 27 projects which reported actual dollar amounts, the cash value of current non-federal support for project related activities ranged from $5,000 to $307,500 among 18 LEA's, $9,000 to $1,628,502 among two SEA's, and $1,500 to $138,626 among seven IHE's. Fifteen of these 27 (56%) projects reported that the current non-federal support either matched or exceeded the amount of federal funds awarded the first program year. According to these respondents, the median ratio of 1976 federal to 1977 non-federal support was 0.563 for LEA's, 1.953 for SEA's, and 2.576 for IHE's.

Because of their potential relevance to federal grant policy, the relationship between project continuation and: (a) the amount of federal funds, and (b) the ratio of federal to non-federal funds awarded the first year were investigated. There was no statistical relationship between the size of the FY-76 federal grant and the current level of continued services and activities. However, there was a statistically significant relationship between the ratio of federal to non-federal funds, with the higher ratios associated with higher levels of continuation.*

Project Results

In addition to the extent of current activity, respondents were asked about the impacts of their projects. Self-reported impacts from the federally funded projects included:

- Increased cooperation/coordination among agencies (82.5%, 33 projects);
- Extended use of school facilities (77.5%, 31 projects);
- Additional enrichment opportunities for out-of-school youth and adults (75%, 30 projects);
- Increased number of trained community education personnel (60%, 24 projects);

*When the projects with the two highest ratios (Minneapolis, Minnesota, at 9.14 and Flint, Michigan, at 3.57) are dropped from the analysis, however, the relationship ceases to be statistically significant.

- Policy changes in the grantee's agency which were supportive of community education (55%, 22 projects); and
- An increased number of local school districts with community education programs (42.5%, 17 projects).

Analyses were performed to determine the relationship between these self-reported impacts and the level of continued activity. It was found that the projects which differed in their current level of continuation did not differ in terms of the number of impacts reported. Although no relationship was found between level of continuation and the number of reported impacts, there was a statistically significant relationship between continuation and two of the six possible areas of impact. Specifically, the level of project continuation was positively related to having provided additional enrichment activities for out-of-school youths and to policy changes in the institution.*

As a related area of questioning, the respondents were asked what had been the most positive thing that happened to the community education program as a result of the discontinuance of federal funds. As a separate item, they were also asked for their assessment of the overall impact of the discontinuation of federal funding. On one hand, 28% (11) of the respondents indicated they thought the discontinuation of funding had had positive results and 15% indicated that the discontinuation had caused no impact on the community education program in their institution. On the other hand, 57% indicated negative or very negative impact. It may be of interest to note that the respondents' overall assessment of the discontinuation of funding <u>was not</u> statistically related to:

- having had a program prior to 1976;
- current level of operation;
- the ratio of FY-76 federal/FY-77 non-federal support; or
- the total number of self-reported impacts.

To the question regarding the most positive impact of discontinuing federal funds, most of the grantee representatives did not give an interpretable response.** Of those responding, the most frequently mentioned positive impact was that it had forced generation of local money in support of community education. The second most frequent response was that the project activities had been integrated into the grantee's regular program. Not surprisingly, these responses came primarily from projects which had expanded their activities after the termination of federal support. Those which discontinued or severely decreased their project services tended not to answer the question.

*$r = .270$, $p < .047$ and $r = .463$ $p < .001$, respectively

**One of the directors responded to this question that the most positive result of not being refunded was that his dean did not bite him on the leg.

Relations with USOE

The final area of questioning dealt with the relationship between the non-refunded projects and the Community Education Program (CEP). The respondents were asked whether during the 1976-1977 school year they had been provided with technical information or assistance by the CEP to help with their program, and, if not, whether they would have wanted such help. Separately, they were asked for suggestions for the Office of Education that would improve the effectiveness of future programs.

Of 35 persons who responded,* 34% (12) said they had not received technical assistance from the Community Education Program, and of these, seven said they would have wanted it. Of the 23 project representatives who reported receiving some assistance, approximately half (11) said they were visited by CEP staff. Regarding suggestions to enhance future programs, there were a few suggestions for more assistance and for more site visits, but the most frequent suggestion, made by 75%, was for multi-year funding of community education programs. A more detailed discussion of the relationship between the Community Education Program and the non-refunded and refunded grantees was presented earlier (see Exhibit 6), and will not be repeated here.

Summary

The results of the survey of non-refunded projects indicated that 85% (34) of the grantees had continued activities and services, with the majority (68%) of these being LEA's (23 of 34). The most frequently named source of support for continuation was the grantee itself (67.6%, 23 projects). Forty-four percent (15) of the 34 grantees which continued project activities and reported amounts of current support had done so by matching or exceeding their FY-76 federal grant award. In this regard, it is of interest that there was no statistically significant relationship between the amount of federal support in FY-76 and project continuation.

With respect to impacts, all respondents reported some accruing from the project. The level of continuation was related to two types of impact, additional enrichment activities to youth and the presence of policy changes in their agency. Regarding the future, not surprisingly, the majority (75%) of the respondents suggested multi-year federal funding of community education. They made this suggestion even though more than a quarter (28%) said they thought that the overall impact of the discontinuation of federal funds on their community education program had been positive.

*The others indicated they did not know.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

The data and analyses presented in the preceding chapters lead inescapably to the overall conclusion that the legislative mandate of the Community Schools Act was met and that the federally supported community education projects were quite successful, at least within the framework investigated here. Such compelling and positive findings are unusual. More typically, the results of federal program evaluations are mixed and, if anything, tend toward the negative, especially at the beginning of a new program. Certainly, it is unusual to provide state and local project staff and their superiors an opportunity to make suggestions to a federal funding office and to have the overwhelming response be to increase contact and assistance -- because the interactions to date had been appreciated and of use.

As elsewhere discussed, because of the unusually positive nature of the findings and the inherent limitations on the study method and design, special efforts were made to scrutinize the study design, procedures and results. Further, several special and more indepth analyses were performed to test the basic findings. Because of these reviews, some minor changes from early drafts of this report were made; but throughout, the analytic findings continued to confirm the more subjective judgements of the field evaluation staff. In their formal and informal briefings after visits to 20 projects, these experienced and often skeptical field evaluators reported that they were quite positively impressed with what they had found -- indeed, several noted that they had been quite surprised.

The remarkable consistency of the findings and conclusions presented in the context of the previous chapters makes a detailed reiteration here inappropriate. Suffice it to say that at each major level of program operation (i.e., IHE, SEA, and LEA):

- substantial levels of effort, essentially in keeping with the terms of the federal grants and federal policy, had been expended;
- these levels of program effort and activity were achieved, in part, because there were substantial commitments of non-federal resources, supplementing the federal funds (typically personnel and material, but with small amounts of cash);
- the majority of the projects which had received federal funds for only one year were continuing, at least some of these activities, and in several the level of effort, even without federal funds, had increased; and
- these project supported activities had produced desired effects on the educational and broader community systems with which they were concerned, and also produced identifiable changes in individuals which were appreciated by these project participants.

In somewhat different terms, it may also be concluded that at the local level the major results of the community education projects were: increased use of school facilities, increased citizen participation in school and other public agency decision-making, increased inter-agency coordination, and increased community support for schools. At the state level, the major results were increased awareness of and skills in community education among local level leaders, and increased interagency coordination supportive of community education within the states. Consistent with the terms of their more individualized grants, the major result of the university based projects was training supplied to and judged valuable by persons at the state and local levels. Consistent with the strategy underlying the Community Schools Act and other federal policy and actions, the three types of projects were effectively intertwined, with the training and assistance of the IHE's and SEA's judged useful at the local level.

In considering this record of accomplishment, notice must be given to the role of the federal Community Education Program and its staff. Along with the host of administrative tasks associated with starting and sustaining a new federal program, the staff maintained a relatively informal and personalistic style of interaction with the projects which was clearly appreciated and effective in its result. Comments, both written and verbal, about the unusually helpful, yet non-interfering approach of the Community Education Program personnel, were quite common.

As the future of the federal role in community education is considered, the internal procedures and quite possibly the perception of the federal program from the field may have to undergo some change. If the program expands significantly, there will be more money, more staff, and inevitably more controls and regulations. Though this will be met with dismay by some practitioners, there are hints in the data collected for this study that suggest some such changes would be well advised.

Recordkeeping, for one, may become increasingly important. From what was found in this study,* it is clear that programmatically meaningful data does not now exist, nor could it be gathered without first devoting serious time and resources to identifying what information is most important, and precisely how it is to be gathered and reported across all projects. At present there is a "hodge podge" of frequently low quality data on project activities and results at most of the projects. Since there has been no incentive from the federal level for doing more in this respect, this situation is quite understandable. Indeed, and perhaps with some justification, several practioners have argued strongly that their high ratings for program effectiveness a.e due in substantial part to their not being bogged down with keeping detailed records and worrying about writing major reports. Since

* These findings really confirmed what almost all the field practitioners predicted would be the case.

their point is well taken,* it must be emphasized that the key in any such effort must be to keep the amount of data required to a minimum and to maximize its obvious utility to the practitioner in the field. Unfortunately, these are not always the dominant characteristics of government sponsored information systems.

A broader, yet related issue which the data suggest will increasingly emerge relates to how community education will be defined. There was in some projects a tension, much discussed in the literature, between whether community education was actually a set of programs and services or a process for citizen involvement and resource coordination. Though most community educators describe the concept in process terms, there were suggestions in some projects that as community education gained in staff and stature, some interagency rivalries were starting to occur. With respect to information gathering and reporting, it is the concern of some that with greater emphasis in this area will come a greater need to stress the public recognition of community education as an identifiable program -- and that interagency conflict rather than cooperation will be the inevitable result.

Somewhat similar concerns are expressed by senior state and local officials, as well as community educators in the field, about the dangers inherent in providing large amounts of external funds for community education. As they forcefully observed, the success of community education is premised on local commitment to resolve locally defined needs. The Community Schools Act supports this concept and the data gathered for this study, which indicates both high levels of staff commitment and high success, support this contention as well. Assuming the critical importance of having both a definition of local need and a strong local commitment, care must be exercised in planning the federal and state roles with respect to community education in the years ahead.

Finally, it should be noted that the unusual success in such a short time of the Community Education Program as a federal program would appear to hold some lessons for the future. For community education these lessons include:

- accepting the eight minimum elements as attainable and appropriate;
- maintaining the award of grants for only one year;
- maintaining the award of relatively small grants;
- maximizing local program resources;
- providing training and assistance over time and with a narrower scope;

*In what was perhaps the programmatically least effective project visited, almost no activity except for writing the first year final report and the third year's proposal had occurred during the fall of 1977; the records and other documentation in the project, however, were outstanding.

- devoting additional effort to standardizing definitions and procedures for gathering and reporting project information; and
- recognizing that there is no one best way to implement community education.

For implementing new federal education programs the lessons include:

- building on a well developed, though not necessarily explicit program concept;
- maximizing local input;
- performing the federal role in a more collegial manner;
- frequent, substantive inter-program communication; and
- maximizing competition for assistance.

While much of the above list is often cited when discussing federal education program implementation, history suggests that such actions have not always occurred. Indeed, it would seem quite possible that such frequently spoken words are not really believed, since they are so rarely implemented. The success of the federal Community Education Program suggests strongly that when truly implemented these concepts do produce positive results.

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